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A Letter to the Directors of
the East-India Company, in Conse-
quence of that Most Extraordinary
Event, the Recall of Governor Gen-
eral Sir George Hilario Barlow

By
Samuel Ferrand Waddington

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A
L E T T E R

TO THE

D I R E C T O R S

OF THE HONORABLE

EAST-INDIA COMPANY,

In consequence of that most extraordinary Event,

THE RECALL OF

GOVERNOR GENERAL SIR GEORGE HILARIO
BARLOW, BART.

“ Ingratitude is a vice of the deepest dye.”

L O N D O N :

Printed for the Author, and Sold by B. Crosby, Ludgate
Street; and all other Booksellers in Town
and Country.

BY JOHN ABRAHAM, CLEMENT'S LANE.

MESSRS DIRECTORS,

IT is my design, in this letter, to reply to some *modest* queries, addressed to me lately by “A City Elder,”—through that spirited and constitutional public paper, called the “Independent Whig.” These queries were relative to the “whole truth,” at that epocha, when the Earl of Lauderdale (lately created a British Baron) was a candidate, along with me, for the Shrievalty of London and Middlesex.

It urges me to express my regret, that that junction with his Lordship should have diminished the esteem and confidence which my political sentiments had auspiciously established. In that business, however, I was not possessed of the actual object of his Lordship's design. He was invited and brought into the City by Mr. Alderman Combe, who kindly attached him to my popularity; a measure to which, at an unwise moment, I gave assent, and thus heaped upon myself an odium that, properly, was not my due. The whole arrangement, first, was one of the many beautiful irradiations of that Club, denominated by misnomer "the Whig-Club of England," but (however we may highly respect individuals, most truly unfortunate for Britons and for freedom) is devoid of every requisite but the name. Its three-fold magic embraces and deludes the honest and independent without doors; charms and fascinates those within, not of the sanctorum; and, with the highest ranks and distinction of the

realm,

realm, also holds deep and sweet converse, whether it be with powers before, or whether it be, behind the throne.

Every witling politician ought to have known, that this Club was instituted under the imposing branches of a Whig influence, at a tavern, in St. Martin's Lane, solely for the purpose of securing the election of Mr. Fox for Westminster: and, on my conscience, if one political operation in Europe was *most* fatal to that expansion of the mind, to that additional consolation which progressive knowledge has intitled man to, it was the *hypocrisy*, the tergiversation, the secession, the dereliction, of its members, whenever the siren voice of venality or of power presented a seductive charm. Its principles, I say, were founded on hypocrisy, than which nothing is more baleful. And my observation will, I fear, be amply and lamentably confirmed by the public actions of its chiefs, now enlisted into the phalanx and unfelled by the arm of authority. It cannot
be

be otherwise with the conductors of the Whig-Club of England. I had many fatal proofs of a total want of disinterested patriotism in its internal organization. In my motion there, “ that those who were of the Parliament should no longer secede, but attend their duty or resign, and ask the opinion of constituents,” I was defeated and insulted. But when, deeply impressed with impending circumstances, combined with this Club’s honor and very existence, and most anxious to ascertain the depth of the political wound,—and when I presented that political ordeal, and gave notice of the celebrated motion, “ that the principles of the Whig Revolution of 1688, imperiously demanded that such members as had given evidence on the trials of O’Connor, &c. should be required to render some account of their past political connection with O’Connor, &c.” —when I say, that I was personally sought after, at my own house, and solicited by men now dignified with the highest legal honors,

both

both here and in India, not to urge this measure,—I had then no longer any doubts but that the machinery of this wonderful theatre of mock-patriotism and of stupid inebriety was chiefly applicable to the purpose of ousting ministers, no matter by what means, and by what connexions, and that it was also a delusive rallying-point for those who view the surface only, and a sham reservoir for the claims of oppression, or for the calls of actual philanthropy. Although I might not give Sir James Mackintosh, Alderman Combe, or Mr. Erskine, my “motives” for this unexpected step, it must be obvious, that my motion tended to ascertain, *whether the Irish Reformers were supported, bona fide, by the English Oppositionists; if so, the evidences were as criminal as the culprits at the bar: or, if they did not sincerely sustain the Reformers, their hypocrisy to them demanded the detestation of all good citizens: and (if the reader chooses, in the only possible exception) whether, if deluded by the Reformers,*

formers, men of such shallow perceptions were qualified to be the future prime advisers of the Crown of the United Kingdom, and the protectors of the country's weal?—I feel confident, and I speak boldly.

If I had doubts on this critical conclusion, (I wish it were possible) my premises would be sustained by a reference to the important data in the Irish confessions; by the alarm and the anxiety which the business excited in the Club; urging its members, before the trials, even to the research of the Kent poll-books for the last fifty years; and by subsequent events, among which, that of Earl Thanet's submitting, with Roman heroism, to a punishment *for blows given in Court by a Commoner*, is indeed the most worthy of record. But these matters never met the public eye; they were unworthy of the Club's recording-committee, and of public papers. I humbly trust, however, that my patriotism on that singular event was of "better times;" and

I beg

I beg that it may be admitted as a counter-balance for introducing a nobleman for civic honors. But, when the public sends his Lordship to India for the purpose of supplanting that experienced and pacific servant of the Company, Sir George Barlow, we must alike tremble for the baneful continuation of party and of cabal. It may be presumed, however, that your honorable Court will persevere in that stubborn independence which they have lately displayed upon the application made by the Board of Controul, in the very face of the Governor General's most elegant and gratifying despatch inserted in a Gazette Extraordinary.

Thus far had I committed myself to the public eye, reserving only, (at future periods,) to dilate and to expose, to good patriots, the arrant folly of attaching ideas of *amor patriæ* to that political Club which I have thus denounced. When, in common with all the thinking world, I am imperiously led to proceed by the following apparently-*authentic* intel-

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ligence in all the public papers:—"Mr. Secretary Fox has had a private audience with the King, and his Majesty was induced to consent by his sign manual, agreeably to the Restrictive Act of 1793, to recall Gov. Gen. Sir George Barlow, and a message to this effect has been transmitted to the Court of Directors."

I must resume the subject, but I fear that it will be difficult for you to remove the film of prejudice. You have been accosted generally by partizans, or by interested courtiers: It will, however, I hope, prove a useful variety,—one independent man is worth a thousand hirelings. I will first recapitulate the late proceedings, premising, that for the last three months the public papers have disgusted the reader, with paragraphs *evidently paid for*, preparing him for such a recall, and for the *blessings* to be derived from his successor, the Earl of Lauderdale; I do not mean to detract from his Lordship's talents, they are certainly respectable, altho' it must be obvious, that the financial data of his Lordship, of

Sir

Sir John Sinclair, and of Lord Sheffield, were drawn from the more profound works of Mr. William Morgan, nephew of Dr. Price.

The Court of Proprietors, tremblingly alive to every thing from Mr. Secretary Fox, held an especial court on the 25th of May, relative to the conduct of the Directors during the administration of Marquis Wellesley. Their laudable and grateful resolution was submitted to a ballot, and is as follows :

“ That this Court (of Proprietors,) having considered the papers laid before it, most highly approves of the zeal manifested, and the conduct pursued, by the Court of Directors, and regards *a firm adherence to the principles maintained by the Court of Directors, to be indispensably necessary to preserve the salutary authority over the government of India, vested by law in the Court of Directors*; to restrain a profuse expenditure of public money; and to prevent all schemes of conquest

and extension of dominion ; measures, which the legislature has declared to be repugnant to the wish, the honor, and the policy, of the nation ; and this Court *doth assure the Court of Directors of its most cordial and zealous support, with a view to preserve unimpaired the rights and privileges of the East India Company.*"

" LONDON, 25th of May, 1806."

Carried by 928 against 195.—Majority 733.

The Honorable Court of Directors also met, upon the requisition from the Board of Controul, or rather from the above Secretary, and against the recall of the Gov. General, and appointment of the Earl of Lauderdale, *to their eternal honor*, divided, 18 against 4 Directors. Most happily for Sir George Hilario Barlow, the following Gazette Extraordinary, *unfortunately* for Mr. Fox and his friends, consoled the friend of India and philanthropy:

Despatch

*Despatch from Sir George Hilario Barlow.**London Gazette Extraordinary, May 16.**Illahabad, 4th Dec. 1805.*

I have now the honor to inform your Hon. Court, that on the 22d ult. a definitive treaty was concluded between the Rt. Hon. Lord Lake and the Plenipotentiary Agent of Dowlah Row Scindiah, upon terms which appear to me to be calculated to establish the relations of amity and concord between the two States upon the most secure and permanent foundation.

Your Hon. Court will also have the satisfaction to be apprised of the expectation which I confidently entertain of a speedy and favourable termination of hostilities with Juswunt Row Holkar, and of the consequent important reduction of the military charges of the several presidencies inseparable from a state of war.

I have

I have the satisfaction to inform your Hon. Court, that *perfect tranquillity prevails in every quarter of the Company's dominions*; and I am not aware of the probability of any occurrence of a nature calculated to disturb it, or to impair the fundamental sources of the British power and prosperity in India.

Despatches have also been received from Sir George H. Barlow, dated Illahabad, 24th of December, 1805, from which it appears, that, in consequence of the treaty of peace with Scindiah and the confident expectation of a peace with Holkar, orders had been issued for troops to return, agreeably to a peace-establishment."

And the candid reader has, along with you, well contemplated this modest delicate letter, from the Saviour of India, and in a British *Gazette Extraordinary*, is it not mentioned, is it not the height of wanton ingratitude, to urge the Directors, to advise his "most gracious" Majesty, to recall the Gov. General, and thus require *evil for good*? — We must, however, trace this business to its

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its source, I must go back to the notorious India-Bill of Mr. Fox,—and I fear that I must *now* spare him upon this his second preposterous coalition, with men “ who had ruined
 “ their country, and worthy only of condign
 “ punishment.” I must premise, that it is my chief design to arouse the Company from their lethargy, by proving, in this hasty production, that the *sine qua non* of the successive Ministers of this country for 30 years past, was to increase the already immense power of the Crown, by *an uncontrolled ascendancy over the territories and inexhaustible wealth of Hindostan*. In 1783 (I might have gone farther back) we find the Lord Advocate of Scotland, (Mr. Henry Dundas, now Viscount Melville,)—in the House of Commons, thus prefacing his motion for the recall of the most judicious and most successful (*next to* Sir George Barlow) Governor-General, that ever your Court heard of,—I mean that persecuted man, Warren Hastings, Esq.
 “ The Court of Directors, sensible of the
 “ wrongs which were committed, sent out
 “ instruc-

“ instructions, but these were generally disregarded, and *were often injudicious*” He therefore should propose Lord Cornwallis, whose *birth*, whose *rank*, whose military prowess, would unite the most desirable requisites.” Mark, Messrs Directors of a trading community,—“ military requisites.” Mr. Burke was also most vehement for this measure. Posterity will know, however, that this orator’s zeal, in Warren Hastings’s matters, arose from flights to his relative in India. Lord John Cavendish declared, “ that the territorial acquisitions, of the Company, were but a fruitful source of grievance,”—“ let it confine itself to the *Charter of Merchants*.”—Governor Johnstone manfully opposed the measure; “ France had sent out formidable squadrons;—France had an eye to India;—and would you recall the Governor-General when he has just concluded peace with the Mahrattas, and has supplied the expenses of the late war with wonderful ingenuity ?” Mr. Dempster, on the same side, said, that, to supersede Mr. Hastings,

Hastings, would be like recalling Governor Elliot, when hot balls were flying at Gibraltar.

The whole business ended here, *the Bill was lost*. But, in November of that year, Mr. Secretary Fox, *true to the latent principle*, brought forward his “celebrated” Bill for the purpose of “relieving” the company from the burden of *directing their own affairs*, by an investment of their powers in seven commissioners, (of which, I think, Earl Fitzwilliam is now only living,) “for the benefit of the proprietors and of the public.” My mercantile affairs are in confusion, I am incapable of farther conducting them, and my creditors (the public through their representatives) kindly take them out of my hands, and vest them in those of Earl Fitzwilliam and six others; *this* is the case in plain English.—Mr. Fox, who had scarcely taken his seat as a Minister, declared “that
“ it was impossible for a subject of greater
dignity and weight to be under the inspec-
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tion of a British Parliament; it involved the best interests, if such be the denomination we choose to bestow upon the *sources of commerce and opulence of the empire*. It was intimately connected with the honor and fair fame of the English nation; and, which was of a thousand times more importance, it was to give a colour to the fate and the happiness of thirty millions of men! The patronage and wealth of India might prove a permanent source of *influence and corruption*; and, placed implicitly in WRONG HANDS, they might overturn that balance of the constitution, which we have been habituated to view with so fond an admiration, and give a new face to the government of these islands!! Whatever may be Mr. Hastings's *demerits*, he is a man of a very different stamp from the *herd* of our late Governors of India. The resolution of the house to recall an Asiatic Governor *had been disobeyed, and a vote of thanks substituted by the Court of Proprietors.*" This is but an outline of Mr. Fox's speech. His Bill,

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while it preserved the monopoly, and left untouched the question of the territorial right, proposed no less than to take, from the Proprietors and the Directors, the *entire* administration of their territorial and commercial affairs. It took from them their house in Leadenhall-street, together with all their books, papers, and documents, vesting the entire management, the appointment of all officers and servants, the rights of peace and war, and the disposal of the whole revenue, in the hands of these seven commissioners. They were *first* to be chosen by the legislature,—*afterwards* by the crown,—and to hold their offices, as the Judges of England, only removable by an address from a house of Parliament. “ This business forced itself upon him and the nation; he came forward with no other reason on earth than because the necessity was so urgent;—*its pressure so irresistible that no farther delay could be admitted*; they (the Company) now want a loan of half a million; they are drawn upon for two more:—*shall*

their bills be dishonored? Good man! how delighted will the close hunks and gabies be with this extract. “ The Directors had acquiesced in the recall of Mr. Hastings, but the Court of Proprietors had rescinded the vote, and had voted him their thanks for his conduct.” The opposition, in reply, declared that “ *every thing* had been expected of Mr. Fox, but the measure of that day augured the fatal effects of his junction with Lord North. *It was impossible that he could ever be hereafter trusted as the Minister of this country.*” Mr. Pitt (for whom Mr. Fox is now paying a splendid mausoleum) declared, that, “ by this Bill, the *annihilation of the charter of the Company, and a new and unconstitutional influence, was created.* The Bill attacked the most solemn charters. It was a *fair purchase made of the public, an equal compact.* Pass this Bill, what assurance had we for the great charter itself? Every thing was to be given up. *Imagination was at a loss to guess at the most insignificant trifle which had escaped the harp-yclaws of a RAVENOUS*

coalition.

coalition. Did Mr. Fox wish to be a dictator and be crowned? I will hold no comparisons with Cromwells, Cæfars, and Catilines! In opposition, he has declared that the influence of the crown was enormous;—he would render the crown every thing.” Mr. Henry Dundas, “ he has out-heroded Herod.” The bill, however, was strenuously supported by Mr. Erskine, now High Chancellor Lord Erskine; Mr. Courtenay, now a Treasury-Lord; by Lord Rawdon, now Earl Moira, Master-General of the Ordnance; and by Lord Maitland, now Earl of Lauderdale, and, they say, Governor-General of India. It was opposed by Mr. Wilberforce also, and carried by a small majority; it was petitioned against by both the Court of Proprietors and by the Directors.

In the upper house, Earl Temple and Lord Thurlow manfully opposed it, and it was there rejected 95 to 76. This terminated Mr. Fox’s bill, and his coalition with Lord North. It cannot however be disguised, that,

in the bill of Mr. Pitt, which ensued, and which was lost by a majority of 8, the same design of wresting the affairs of India out of the hands of the *sole Proprietors*, and of attacking its inexhaustible resources, and incalculable patronage and power, was the true basis and foundation.

The Company, alive to its interest,—the nation at large also,—however individually venal, not lost in shameless dishonour, would not allow even their then favorite, the son of a Chatham, to prostitute *the nation's honor, the solemnity of a chartered right*, at the shrine of *ambition* or of *theoretical speculation*.—They were aware, no doubt, that the *sole principle* of that contract, between the Government and the Company, was a commercial principle;—and that such principle, whenever deviated from, either by the mad ambition of governors, like Clive, or like Wellesley, or by the machinations of the British Ministers, *only* had produced those enormous expenses and calamities, which
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are so truly deplored by the real friends of the Company, yet, so highly acceptable to those ministers and politicians as are actuated by a *thirst for Asiatic power and arbitrary sway*.

My position, that the sole power of India is the object, is confirmed by the act of Mr. Pitt, some years afterwards,—the establishment of the Board of Controul over the actions of the Court of Directors ; and also by the recent declarations made by ministers or *their dependents* in the House of Commons ; that “ this Controul, and this Court of Directors, are incongruous ;—that some more simple plan of conducting India affairs must sooner or later be devised.” To which, however, Mr. Francis appears adverse. He is, of all men in Europe, best informed on India affairs, and *I hope* that he will copy Mr. Paull in his disinterestedness, and *that he is not fallen* into the pernicious and destructive wiles of the present administration, relative to that devoted quarter of the globe.—It is a pity but we
could

could study *what* originally established Indian prosperity,—and even our own, or that of every other rational people, where commerce has extended its tranquil wing. *It was honorable engagements, not the sword;—it was commerce, uncontrolled by power.*—From the earliest ages, the expansion of commerce has been in due relation to the influence of power:—Egypt, Tyre, Rome, Carthage, Venice, Genoa, successively sunk into *arbitrary power*, poverty, and rags. In more modern ages, Portugal, Holland, England, America, and France, have made their progressive or retrograde march in the civilised arts of manufactory and commerce, as their respective people were more or less ponderous in the scale of government. It is because that *freedom is the very soul of commerce*; it cannot even suffer the “controul” of a *Maximum* or a *Minimum* upon a single production; for, at the most enlightened period of our own history, when party and cabal had not reached their climax,—I mean the beginning of this reign, all restrictive acts upon

upon the freedom of commerce, were removed by a sweeping repeal of Parliament, “ as they had prevented a free trade, and only tended to advance prices.”

In our own time we witness, the vain and blighting efforts making by the arbitrary governments of Prussia and Russia, or of Sweden, to become manufacturers; they will soon discover, that a restriction of speech and of communication, an insecurity of property, are insurmountable obstacles.—In this country even, we are by our warlike habits, endangering those genial sources of comfort, of which we have been the envy and admiration, and the day is not far distant, when it will be a question, whether we must re-trace our steps, or again immerge into a military government

The India Company has before it a labyrinth of difficulties. If Marquis Wellesley had been deputed to have laid you prostrate at the feet of the throne, it must be admitted, that he has assiduously employed himself. A

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debt

debt of eleven increased to thirty-two millions ! and all by what ? *by measures diametrically opposite to the established pacific commercial defensive principles, upon which the Company's charters were founded, and by which it had originally prospered.*—But like Mr. Paull, to whom the country is infinitely indebted, I may be told, that I speak “ at my peril ”—On this point, however, I am at issue with Mr. Fox and his colleagues. Mr. Fox may enter the royal presence and advise the King to give his sign manual for the recall of a Governor General, but this will not do away the indelible stain of ingratitude for *signal services* ; it will not replace the *stimulus to laudable public services* ; when we find that in this case, as with Sir David Baird and Commodore Popham, party, not public virtue, *a silly promise to a dependant*, are the motives which actuate this champion of his country's rights !

If reforms in India are wanting ; and where does not the imperfectibility of man demand
reform

reform; let them be made through their lawful and natural channel, through the Directors, and through such men as Barlow or of Francis, whose natural lives even have been contracted by local experience; and let us hear no more of the nomination of strangers to India's gigantic operations. Let Mr. Fox and his new friends stand fair, if they can, with the nation—let them not on every occasion avoid the introduction of papers. After the resolution of the Court of Proprietors, it is the bounden duty of Mr. Fox, to fathom the business of Marquis Wellesley; or, has he gone “accorde” with my Lord Grenville, “OBLIVION UPON THE PAST?” Are we to barter our 40s. Freeholders for Parliamentary Reform? a 10 per cent. in lieu of 6d Property Tax? an increased standing Army for the new modelling of the old constitutional force, the Militia? an exciseman in every private brewhouse for the “Shop Tax?” the American Intercourse bill, for the navigation

act? But let it not be said that Mr. Fox's principles relative to freedom and to *control over the public expenditure*, shall be first exposed and ridiculed, shall be first brought to *the shrine of derision*, when he has arrived at the highth of power, and that "control" shall only appear, when Indian government is to be wrested from its rightful possessors.—Let us not see realized, that ominous HEARSAY* of the last three years, that "*the expenses of this war, and of future ones, would be derivable from India.*" There was a time (vide Parliamentary Register) when Mr. Fox had objections to this Board of control—and when he viewed it with jealousy—and when Mr. Francis's speech, 5th of April, 1806, censuring Marquis Wellesley for the carnatic war, "was completely unanswerable." Has Mr. Fox no leisure to look into his own palpable inconsistencies—Does he suppose that there is a child ignorant—that his protege's (Lord H. Petty) bill

* All Mr. Burke's solemn truths were conveyed by a "Hearsay."

Bill for the appointment of commissioners to audit public accounts, amounting to nearly five hundred millions, is a great libel on his worthy coadjutor, Lord Grenville, who as auditor for life (and also First Lord of the Treasury) has enjoyed a most splendid annuity, *for not passing such accounts?*

But I humbly trust, that I have already sufficiently attracted your attention to the alarming position in which his Majesty's new Ministers would place you. If, however, unfortunately you should not arouse, and assert your independency, in which you will be cordially supported by the virtuous community—I pledge myself that the period is not distant, when these their plans will be found to be a veritable basis for the *unity of the united kingdom with Hindostan*—and that the talents and profound ingenuity of the Earl of Lauderdale, will have been only *preliminary and subservient to a more powerful, definitive,*
and

*and exclusive system of dominion, under the
benign sway of a far more illustrious personage
than any which your Honorable Court has ever
beheld among the past Governors-General of
India.*

S. F. WADDINGTON.

6th June, 1806.



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